

**Implementation Sub- Committee Of The Task Force on Federal
Legislation
of the Children's Cabinet**

MEETING MINUTES

November 5, 2004

Linda Katz called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM at the Casey Family Services. Introductions were made and the October 1, 2004 meeting minutes were approved.

Final Evaluation Report - Mary Ann Bromley, Ph.D.

Linda asked that we allow Mary Ann Bromley to present her findings as the first agenda item. Mary Ann is leaving for six months to vacation and then go to Cambodia and attempt to set up a program similar to the case management program now operated at Rhode Island College (RIC). She is scheduled to leave November 6, 2004 and needed to leave early to finish preparations for her departure.

Mary Ann distributed copies of the RIC 5 year longitudinal study of the FIP program impact on participating families. The version presented was the last draft of the study, which began February 1998 and concluded October 2003. As this is the final draft any changes or requests would need to be placed with Sue Pearlmutter who will be preparing the final version of the report in Mary Ann's absence.

Mary Ann presented the following highlights of the report. There were 638 FIP beneficiaries in the original sample, of which 383 were followed for all five years.

v Families are better off now than five years ago. 55% are no longer on FIP.

v None of the families have reached the 60 month mark on FIP although 23% have left and returned are considered cyclers.

v One fifth, 22%, remained on FIP throughout the five-year study.

v There was an increase of 36 percentage points in the number of families whose income rose above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Five per cent of the families were above FPL at the start of the study and 41% were above FPL at the conclusion.

v There was a significant increase in family income due to employment over the five-year period, 22% were employed at the start of the study as compared to 49% at the conclusion. Wages increased from an average of \$7.74 to \$9.08.

v Many of those no longer receiving FIP cash are still receiving some form of assistance from DHS. Sixty nine percent are receiving childcare subsidies. Sixty one percent are enrolled in Rite Care.

v Education and training contributed to positive employment outcomes. Those receiving vocational education or post secondary education as part of their plan were less likely to be on FIP at the five year mark, 69% as opposed to 53% and to have a higher average hourly wage, \$11.37 as opposed to \$8.66.

The FIP study attempted to identify the degree of success in accomplishing major FIP goals. Goal 1 was to move families on FIP and in poverty, off FIP and out of poverty. Participants were interviewed at four intervals baseline, year 2, year 3, and year 4. There was a 27% increase in the percent employed in year 4 over the baseline. The statistically most significant increase in employed participants was in year 2 of the study with no significant difference in year three and four. This may be due to the recession that began in March 2001. All measures of satisfaction were positive. There was a high level of satisfaction with participant's employment. Sue Pearlmutter interjected that recent articles suggest that questions on level of satisfaction may not be very reliable measures of satisfaction.

Goal 2 was that FIP support the healthy development of low-income children and assure that the children be no worse off than they were before welfare reform. In year 2,3, and 4 of the study parents were asked if one or more of their children might have one of a list of ten issues which included physical and mental health issues as well as education related issues. When year 2 and year 4 are compared all issues, except for drug and alcohol issues, were cited more frequently in year 4 than in year 2. One of the participants postulated that issues may have increased because the children had aged five years and may now more clearly manifest these issues. The question of food security was discussed. Participants were asked if they had

worried about running out of food before they had more money to buy food and did they actually run out of food in the past twelve months. The answer to the insecurity question was year 2 - 56%, in year 3 - 49% and in year 4 – 51%. The answer whether they had actually run out of food was respectively 38%, 31% and 35%. Finally, Mary Ann reported that those who had left FIP were more likely to have received vocational education or training than those that remained on FIP. Mary Ann recommended that future studies be smaller, that there be new questions and a new sample.

Update on Rite Works – June Allen

June distributed Rite works Monthly Activity Report. There were approximately 300 cases in retention services per month. The number of monthly referrals to Rite Works ranged from 116 to 209. The no show rate for those referred ranged from 29% to 78%. June explained that when a client does not comply with the referral to Rite Works they are rescheduled to meet with Rite Works and this second appointment is considered as the conciliation appointment. The Rite Works staff uses a one page assessment form to further identify employment issues and they have a welcome to Rite works packet that explains the responsibilities of the participant and gives them insights into the world of work.

Update on FIP Changes – Donalda Carlson

Donalda was called to another meeting and Sherry Campanelli and Randy Rosati gave the update on Full Family Sanction. As of September 15, 2004, 115 cases were closed with a full family sanction, September 30 another 16 cases were closed and 9 more cases in October. Randy estimated that there were potentially about 10 cases per month that could be closed with a full family sanction if the head of household did not comply with FIP work/activity requirements. At this point most of these cases are remaining closed.

Edward Sneesby reported on the status of alternative cash assistance implementation. Training on the policy for this new benefit will begin in early December and implementation will occur shortly thereafter. The notices have been reviewed and acronyms have been removed. It was recommended that Dorcas Place review the notice as well. Ed said that when clients take the alternative cash option the FIP clock will not run, there will be no co-pay on child care, client will receive Rite Care and Food Stamps.

Discussion of Fraud Regulations – Linda Katz

Linda noted that additional fraud staff was included in the Governor's budget. Linda requested a public hearing on the new rules. She reported that childcare assistance was now subject to fraud investigations. Linda related that the Front End Detection (FRED) policies were to be moved to the general section and would apply to

Food Stamps. She believes that this is in conflict with Food Stamp rules. Linda said that she would raise this at the hearing.

The public hearing date was set for November 17, 2004.

Update on Rapid Job Entry – Camille Vollaro

This report was deferred since Camille, recovering from surgery, was unable to attend the meeting.

The meeting was called to an end at 11:AM.

Submitted by: Gabriella Barros